

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

TRUSTEES OF THE DRYWALL TAPERS AND)	
POINTERS LOCAL UNION NO. 1974 BENEFIT FUNDS,)	
)	Index No.: 18-CIV-8342
)	
Plaintiffs,)	<u>COMPLAINT</u>
)	
-against-)	
)	
THE MANHATTAN COMPANY OF NEW YORK, INC.,)	
)	
Defendant.)	

Plaintiffs, Trustees of the Drywall Tapers and Pointers Local Union No. 1974 Benefit Funds (hereinafter referred to as the "Funds") or (collectively referred to as "Plaintiffs") by their attorneys Barnes, Iaccarino & Shepherd LLP allege as follows:

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

1. This action is based on the provisions of Section 301 of the Labor Management Relations Act of 1947 (hereinafter referred to as the "Taft-Hartley Act") 29 U.S.C. Section 185, and on Section 502(a)(3) and Section 515 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act, as amended (hereinafter referred to as "ERISA") (29 U.S.C. Section 1132(a)(3) and 29 U.S.C. 1145).

2. Jurisdiction is conferred upon this Court by Section 301 of the Taft-Hartley Act (29 U.S.C. Section 185) and Sections 502(e)(1) and 502(f) of ERISA (29 U.S.C. Sections 1132(e)(1) and 1132(f)); and derivative jurisdiction is contained in 28 U.S.C. Sections 1331 and 1337.

3. Venue properly lies in this District under the provisions of 502(e)(2) of ERISA (29 U.S.C. Section 1132(e)(2)) and Section 301 of the Taft-Hartley Act (29 U.S.C. Section 185) and 28 U.S.C. Section 1391(b).

4. This action is brought by the respective Trustees of the Funds in their fiduciary capacities for monetary damages and other equitable relief under ERISA and for breach of a labor contract to secure performance by an Employer of specific statutory and contractual obligations to submit the required monetary contributions and/or reports to the Plaintiffs in a timely fashion.

PARTIES

5. The Plaintiff Trustees are, at all relevant times, the fiduciaries of jointly administered multi-employer, labor management trust funds as defined by Section 3(21)(A) and Section 502(a)(3) of ERISA (29 U.S.C. Sections 1002(21)(A) and 1132(a)(3)). The Funds are established and maintained by the various Employers pursuant to the terms of the Trade Agreements and Trust Indentures in accordance with Section 302(c)(5)(1) of the Taft-Hartley Act (29 U.S.C. Section 186 (c)(5)). The Funds are employee benefit plans within the meaning of Sections 3(1), 3(2), 3(3) and 502(d)(1) of ERISA (29 U.S.C. Sections 1002 3(1), 3(2), 3(3) and 1132(d)(1)), and multi-employer plans within the meaning of Sections 3(37) and 515 of ERISA (29 U.S.C. Sections 1002(37) and 1145). Plaintiffs are Trustees of the Funds and the "plan sponsor" within the meaning of Section (3)(16)(B)(iii) of ERISA (29 U.S.C. Section 1002(16)(B)(iii)).

6. The Funds provide fringe benefits to eligible employees, retirees and their dependents on whose behalf the Employer is required to contribute to the Fund pursuant to its Trade Agreement (hereinafter referred to as the "Agreement") between the Employer and the Union. The Funds are authorized to collect contributions on behalf of the employees from the Employers and the Plaintiff Trustees as fiduciaries of the Funds are authorized to maintain suit as independent legal entities under Section 502(d)(1) of ERISA (29 U.S.C. Section 1132(d)(1)) and are obligated to bring actions to enforce the provisions of the Trade Agreement and Trust Indentures that concern the protection of employee benefit rights.

7. The Fund's principal office is located and administered at 36-18 33rd Street 2nd FL

Long Island City, NY 11106 in the County of New York.

8. The Union is a labor organization within the meaning of Section 301 of the Taft-Hartley Act (29 U.S.C. Section 185) which represents employees in an industry affecting commerce as defined in Section 501 of the Taft-Hartley Act (29 U.S.C. Section 142), and Section 3(4) of ERISA (29 U.S.C. Section 1002(4)), and as further defined in Section 12 of the General Associations Law of the State of New York.

9. The Union maintains an office and is administered at 45 West 14th Street, New York, 10011 in the County of New York.

10. Upon information and belief, the Defendant, The Manhattan Company of New York, Inc. (hereinafter referred to as “the Employer”) at all relevant times, was and is an “employer” within the meaning of Sections 3(5) and 515 of ERISA (29 U.S.C. Sections 1002(5) and 1145) and was and still is an employer in an industry affecting commerce within the meaning of Section 301 of the Taft-Hartley Act (29 U.S.C. Section 185).

11. Upon information and belief, the Employer is a for-profit domestic corporation duly organized and existing pursuant to the laws of the State of New York with its principal place of business at 700 Rockaway Turnpike, Lawrence, New York in the Nassau of Kings.

CAUSES FOR RELIEF
AS AND FOR A FIRST CLAIM FOR RELIEF

12. The Employer executed an Agreement with the Union and/or was and still is a party to an Agreement with the Union by virtue of membership in an Employer Association.

13. The Agreement and/or Trust Indenture and/or Policy for Collection of Delinquent Contributions (hereinafter referred to as the “Policy”) requires the Employer to submit contribution reports setting forth the hours that each of its employees worked and the amount of contributions due pursuant to the rate schedules set forth in the Agreement for all work performed by its employees

covered by the Agreement and to remit such monetary contributions in accordance with the Agreement and the rules and regulations established in the Trust Indenture.

14. Upon information and belief, as a result of work performed by the individual employees of the Employer pursuant to the Agreement, there became due and owing to the Funds from the Employer fringe benefit contributions.

15. The Employer has failed and refused to remit to the Funds those fringe benefit contributions due and owing under the Agreement and in accordance with the Trust Indentures in the minimum amount of \$23,077.48 for the period of October 3, 2017 through December 26, 2017.

16. These amounts described in paragraph 15 above are due and owing to the Funds and Union and are actual and estimated based upon employer remittance reports.

17. The Employer's failure, refusal or neglect to remit the proper contributions to the Plaintiffs constitutes a violation of the Agreement between the Employer and the Union wherein the Funds are third party beneficiaries.

18. Pursuant to the Agreement and the Policy leave upon the Employer's failure to timely remit payment of fringe benefit contributions same shall be subject to interest at the rate of 5.25% above prime per annum and liquidated damages at the rate of 10% of the delinquent contributions. In addition, if enforcement or collection procedures shall be commenced against an employer, such employer shall be required to pay the reasonable cost of expenses including attorney's fees and court costs.

19. Accordingly, pursuant to the Agreement the Employer is liable to Plaintiffs for the minimum amount of \$23,077.48 for the period of October 3, 2017 through December 26, 2017, plus interest, liquidated damages, court costs and expenses and attorneys' fees.

AS AND FOR A SECOND CLAIM FOR RELIEF

20. Plaintiffs repeat, reiterate and reallege each and every allegation contained in paragraphs “1” through “19” of this Complaint as if fully set forth at length herein.

21. Section 515 of ERISA, (29 U.S.C. Section 1145) requires employers to pay fringe benefit contributions in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Agreement and Trust Indentures.

22. The Employer has failed to pay or timely pay the benefit contributions and/or submit the contribution reports to Plaintiffs owed as a result of work performed by individual employees of the Employer. Such failure to remit timely payment constitutes a violation of Section 515 of ERISA (29 U.S.C. Section 1145).

23. Section 502 of ERISA (29 U.S.C. Section 1132) provides that upon a finding of an employer violation of Section 515 of ERISA (29 U.S.C. Section 1145) which requires employers to pay benefit contributions in accordance with the terms and conditions of collective bargaining agreements, the Court shall award payment to a plaintiffs’ Fund of the unpaid fringe benefit contributions, plus liquidated damages and interest on the unpaid principal amount due, together with reasonable attorneys’ fees and costs and disbursements incurred in the action.

24. The failure to pay has injured the Funds by delaying the investment of contributions and causing unnecessary administrative costs for the Funds and has injured the participants and beneficiaries and other contributing employers of the benefit plan in the form of lower benefits and higher contribution amounts.

25. Accordingly, the Employer is liable to Plaintiffs under the Agreement and any Trust Indenture concerning the payment of fringe benefit contributions and late charges and under Sections 502 and 515 of ERISA (29 U.S.C. Sections 1132 and 1145) due to the failure to pay contributions when they are due.

26. Accordingly, the Employer is liable to the Funds in the minimum amount of \$23,077.48 for the period of October 3, 2017 through December 26, 2017 plus liquidated damages, interest, attorneys' fees, court costs and disbursements in this action pursuant to Section 502 of ERISA (29 U.S.C. Section 1132).

AS AND FOR A THIRD CLAIM FOR RELIEF

27. Plaintiffs repeat, reiterate and reallege each and every allegation contained in paragraphs "1 through 26" of this Complaint as if set forth at length herein.

28. Pursuant to ERISA, the Agreement and/or Trust Indenture, the Employer is required to timely submit current benefit contributions and reports to Plaintiffs.

29. Upon information and belief, the Employer has in the past failed to timely submit current fringe benefit contributions and reports to Plaintiffs and is in breach of the statutory obligations under ERISA, the Agreement and Trust Indenture.

30. During the course of the instant action, additional contributions and/or delinquency charges may become due and owing. If Defendant fails to pay the contributions and/or delinquency charges, as part of this action, at the time of trial or judgment, whichever is later, those additional amounts should be included.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs respectfully pray for Judgment against Defendant Certified Drywall, Inc. as follows:

On the First and Second Claims for Relief:

- (a) In the minimum sum of \$23,077.48 owed for contributions for the period of October 3, 2017 through December 26, 2017; plus interest, liquidated damages, attorneys' fees, court costs and disbursements all in accordance with the Trade Agreement and the Policy for Collection of Delinquent Contributions.

On the Third Claim for Relief:

(b) Damages in the amount of any additional contributions and/or delinquency charges which may become due and owing during the course of the instant action which amount shall include the principal plus interest and liquidated damages.

On All Claims for Relief:

(e) For such other and further relief as to the Court deems appropriate.

Dated: Elmsford, New York
September 13, 2018

Respectfully submitted,
BARNES, IACCARINO & SHEPHERD LLP

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